1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

this food is given as charity to the older women of the group who have no husbands. Both of these acts, the giving of the food and the sending out of the kola nuts, are said to be the formal announcement of the new baby's birth as well as an invitation to attend the naming ceremony held on the eighth day after birth, that is to say on the same day one week later.

It is worth noting at this point that these precautions are well adapted to the facts of Kanuri life. Infant mortality is extremely common, varying for example between 122 and 240 per thousand in the urban areas where the hospitals have been keeping records. This is especially true of the first few hours and days after birth. One man in Magumeri had only two children alive out of nine born to him and his one wife, and five of these nine had died within the first eight days of life. Although this case is somewhat exceptional, it is not difficult to hear of comparable reports throughout the emirate. The Kanuri see many of these deaths as being the result of someone's or something's (a spirit, for instance) malevolent intentions. Charms and prayers are used and divination by religious leaders is sometimes resorted to because of the insecurity the parents feel over the survival of their newborn infant. Thus the eight-day period before the naming ceremony is a cultural buffer, a cushion that allows for the disappointment and grief associated with the highly possible death of the infant.

The Naming

Early in the morning of the eighth day the formal naming ceremony is performed. As they do for all public gatherings, men and women go separately; the women, in groups formed into single files according to rank, move past the men who are seated on the ground near the entrance to the compound. The ground millet flour and other foods received at this time as gifts allow the wife to prepare her husband's food during her confinement without engaging in a most arduous part of her work—that of grinding the millet into flour. Inside the compound the women sit in front of the mother's hut chatting gaily and coloring their teeth with tobacco flowers and a local plant used specifically for this purpose. The barber and his young assistant or apprentice arrive and cut facemarks on the new-born infant and then remove its uvula. While waiting to carry out this ritual function, the barber and his assistants cut the women's hair free of charge as a mark of the festiveness of the occasion. The women collect some money for the barber which is given to him after the baby has been successfully incised. The ceremony ends when perfume is passed among the women and all assembled dip their fingers in tiny bottles or a glass, then rub the scent over their neck and hands. Many, however, stay on talking and chatting for several hours before drifting back in small groups to their own compounds.

In front of the compound the men sit on mats. On one side of the gate sit the *mallams* (religious practitioners) reading from the Koran. On the other side of the infant's hut are the men of the household sitting in order of seniority with the most senior closest to the door. Next to them are their close friends, relatives, and the highest ranking people in attendance. The rest spread out along the north side of the compound under its front wall and everyone waits for the name to be an-

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

nounced. Every man contributes a small cash gift of two to five shillings, given as a token of friendship and esteem and collected by a close friend of the father of the new child. The money is used to pay the barber and the *mallams* who say prayers to ensure the safety of the child and his future success.

When the barber has finished his work, the father sends in a friend to tell the women the name he has chosen for the new child. Ideally his friend should return and then announce the name to the men outside, but very often the men are told at the same time. Now the baby is a person; it has a name; its sex is known; it has joined the compound and the community. The senior *mallam* leads everyone in a prayer and the ceremony is over. Kola nuts and perfume are passed around among the men and the new father gives a few pennies to each reader of the Koran and several shillings to the senior *mallam*. It is a memorable day for the parents and there is general rejoicing among those who know about the ceremony and are related in some way to the family. One informant put it this way:

> Everyone is happy because the father and mother have shown that they have practiced the customs of our people, and they have shown that they have been blessed with good fortune because "the little kitten" has become a person.

Especially pleased on such occasions is the namesake of the new baby, if he is alive, for it is a public recognition of the respect and affection shown to this person by the family. Very often the name used is that of the grandparent. The Kanuri very often take turns using grandparent's names on both sides of the family although some insist that boys be named from the father's side and girls from the mother's. However, parents may also name children after an important person or a person to whom the father owes some subordination. The Kanuri, like people in many places, avoid using the names of their own parents or parents-in-law and high status or elderly people in general. Therefore the child is given a nickname that often indicates his or her relationship to the person whose name he bears. For example, many Kanuri boys are named Abba Gana (small father) or simply Abba (father) indicating that they have been named after the father of one of their parents. The link to the grandparent is even closer if the latter has been named after *his* grandparent making him a person who is called Abba Gana as well. Thus the grandson can, in practice, share both his grandfather's "real" name and his nickname as well. Sometimes the mother is referred to in a name, or even the order of one's birth in relation to other children. Thus two of the contemporary sons of the royal family in Bornu are called Abba Kiari Kura and Abba Kiari Shuwa. These men are half brothers named after their royal grandfather—Kiari. Indeed Kiari itself is a circumlocution meaning "old" or "the old one." Kura means "the big one" or "the oldest brother," and Shuwa refers to the tribal membership of Abba Kiari Shuwa's mother. Thus one son, Abba Kiari Kura, is called "father, the old one, the eldest," or "the eldest one named after my father, the old one," and the other brother, Abba Kiari Shuwa, is "father, the old one, the Shuwa," or the "son of the Shuwa wife who is named after my father, the old one." Abba Kiari's real name, Mustafa, never appears in these well-known names of his grandsons who are his recognized namesakes. Sometimes a name reflects the title of the person that the child is named after. Thus Mallam Kumbar refers to the title of the particular person's grandfather, who was Kumbar in the court of the king. Or again, sometimes

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

in Magumeri died in the morning and was buried in the afternoon. The people explained this by saying that it was the hot season and he had died early in the morning. To wait until the next morning, they said, was too long and not good for the community. This was an oblique way of referring to the belief that the ghost of a dead man is dangerous especially to children until he is buried.

The ceremony itself is quite simple. The body is washed, wrapped in a white cloth and placed on a bier, and then taken out to the burial grounds by the men. Prayers are said continually and the family mourns officially for forty days by saying special prayers and remaining close to home. During the ceremony men remain impassive, quietly telling their beads and praying softly to themselves. Women, on the other hand, come in groups walking slowly in single file wailing and crying, especially if the deceased is a close neighbor, friend, or relative. If a man is needed for a short communication, a woman might stop wailing suddenly, talk in an ordinary voice, then just as quickly resume her keening. A few women at every funeral were observed who were much more totally involved and did not break up their wailing when asked to do something else. Sometimes these wails of the women become songs with words. This is less true at funerals of men where if it happens the song or chant says over and over again, "He was a good man." For a dead woman the words are also, "She was a good woman," but an added verse, especially if the dead woman was not very old, refers to the hard life of a woman and how long and unending are her chores. There is a definite implication here that the heavy burdens of womanhood can bring an early death.

This, then is the Kanuri life cycle; it is adapted to Bornu society and the historical development of that society. The fact that the household is the major unit of social organization means that people of different ages are constantly in touch with one another. Even though those in all age groups have many friends of their own age, they associate freely and easily with people of all age groups within their household where membership crosses generation lines. This means that younger age groupings are constantly learning the ways of behaving and thinking of those older than themselves and almost automatically know how to act as they grow up. By contrast in many western societies interaction between generations is extremely difficult, and each generation seems to be developing an almost semi-separate culture whose intricacies must be learned after one has joined that particular age group. Because western schooling has not yet separated an entire generation from their parents, there is little room among the Kanuri for many discontinuities in learning, and therefore in hopes, fears, and aspirations on the part of each successive generation. Obviously this has produced and helps to maintain much of the stability in Kanuri society, and as such it is a key factor when we wish to ask questions about conditions of change in the entire society of Bornu.

779 of the population is pagan (Maguzawa), there are no pagan
177 Kanuri. Among the tribes who are influenced by and are ac-
779 culturating to the Kanuri, the Bede, the Babur, and the Marghi, both pagans and Moslems can be found.

795 According to Trimingham[1], many pagans in the Western Sudan become Moslems by slipping into Islam, calling themselves "Mohammad", and imitating their fellows without special ceremoney. A rite is performed in the case of chiefs and important men, where public recognition is sought. This is undoubtedly the case for those part-Moslem, part-pagan peoples surrounding the Kanuri, and was also probably true in former centuries when the Kanuri themselves adopted Islam.

182 Today Islam is well integrated into Kanuri culture. With-
779 out entering into a detailed discussion of Islam as practiced by the Kanuri, those general areas which are most affected by Islam will be discussed here. These include: law, education and social organization. To begin with, however, it is necessary to discuss the general features of Islamic worship as exemplified by the Pillars of Islam.

1. The Pillars of Islam.

782 The Pillars of Islam are five in number. The first of these is the confession of faith (shahada) which those who

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1. J. Spencer Trimingham, Islam in West Africa (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), see Appendix I "Ceremony of Joining Islam", p. 226.

782 embrace Islam pronounce.

The second is ritual prayer. Ritual prayer (Sallah) occurs five times each day at the following times:

Sua (Ar. Asuba)	5 AM (time of arising)
Duar (Ar. Azahar)	2 PM
Asar (Ar. al-Asar)	4 PM
Magaribu (Ar. Magriba)	6:30-7 PM (sunset)
Lasha (Lishai)	10 PM (bedtime)

Generally this observance is strictly followed by all Kanuri. Prayer is an individual matter, and can take place wherever the individual happens to be. The Friday afternoon prayer tends to be communal in character, and people go to mosques to pray. Everyday prayers are not customarily carried out in the
793 mosque. The religious hierarchy is only peripherally involved in the ritual prayer. The Ladan announces the times for prayer by public calling; the Imam (Liman) leads prayers in the mosque on Fridays and on religious holidays.

785 The third Pillar is fasting. During the lunar month of Ramadan all adult Kanuri fast from sunrise to sunset. This is rigidly observed by all, and it would be exceedingly shameful to be seen breaking the fast. The first sighting of the new moon is announced by the Shehu and the news rapidly spreads throughout Bornu that the month of Ramadan has come to an end. The end of fasting is marked by widespread festivities.

782 The fourth Pillar is the giving of alms. There are two types of alms in Islam: the zakat or tithe which all Moslems are expected to give to support the church, and sadaka, or vol-

782 untary alms. Zakat, the tithe for the church, is not given
[793] by the Kanuri. Consequently the clergy are dependent entirely
[792] on sadaka. Koranic specialists who devote themselves entirely to study of the Koran, and to the teaching of the Koran are called Malams. The Malams are supported by sadaka which devout Kanuri are expected to give.

788 The fifth and last Pillar of Islam is the pilgrimage.
177 All who can manage the pilgrimage to Mecca (haj) without hardship are expected at some time to make this trip. The Mais and Shehus undertook the pilgrimage, and in fact, el Kanemi spent some years in Mecca. Large numbers of the Kanuri populace have also made the pilgrimage. Its effect has been to tie Kanuri society to the larger world of Islam, in that way to share in a larger community and to bring back to Bornu new ideas and new products. Pilgrims who travel across the width of Africa by truck from Lake Chad to the Red Sea, find that they have a common bond with other Moslems in the towns through which they pass.

78 The nature of religious observance among the Kanuri can be
182 seen in their adherence to the Pillars of Islam. But Islam
[576] enters into Kanuri life at numerous additional points: in the
[275] common greetings between two individuals when they meet; in the
[262] abstention from any form of alcoholic beverage which tends to
[777] be widely observed; in food taboos; in Koranic charms which most
[757] individuals wear; and in the use of ink from verses of the Koran
796 as cures for illness. Most life crises are marked by religious

a religious role, but it receives political recognition. There are two Limans in Geidam. One Liman leads prayers on religious holidays, and is called Liman Noumaribe (ngumari means religious festival); the other leads the communal Friday prayers and is called Liman Zamabe (Zama means Friday). The Liman Ngumaribe conducts prayers twice each year, at the two most important festivals. When Yerima Mustapha became Ajia of Geidam, he instituted the practice of public communal prayers on the dandal each Friday. This is frequently--though not always--done in Kanuri towns, and had not been the customary practice in Geidam when Kaigama had been Ajia. Yerima made inquiries as to who was considered the most respected Malam in Geidam, and appointed that Malam as the Liman Zamabe of Geidam. The new Liman Zamabe was given a kulugu and a burnoose as marks of office. Though the Liman Ngumaribe had previously held his office under Kaigama, Yerima also gave him a kulugu and a burnoose when he came to Geidam.

2. Religious Festivals.

The month of Ramadan (April 2 to May 1, in 1957) is spent in fasting. During that time neither food nor water is taken into the mouth from sunrise to sunset. All Kanuri above the age of fifteen or sixteen keep the fast. For several years before that boys and girls keep a modified fast, in which three days of fasting are followed by nine days in which the fast is not observed. In Geidam all Kanuri outwardly keep the fast, al-

2:Rosman E-5 (1956-1957) 1966 MSI4 Kanuri MSI4

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796 and most of the important traders. Eating from one bowl at
574 the head group were, in addition to the Alkali, the Chief Scribe,
554 the Treasurer, Malam Jalo, Sidi Mohammad, and the writer.

796 Celebration of the festival marking the end of Ramadan,
182 Ngumori Ashembe, has been described in some detail above. In
554 the description can be seen the integration of a religious festival with the social structure of the town of Geidam. Keeping of the fast is observed by the entire community and serves to bind its members through a ritual of suffering. The communal bond is further strengthened by public prayer marking the end of the fast. The roles of various office-holders can be seen in connection with these observances. The Liman leads the public prayers; the Alkali attests to the sighting of the new moon; and the Ajia more than any other person uses the festival celebrations to demonstrate and to validate his high status and his great power. The day of Ngumori Ashembe is marked by horse displays in which the kabuna of the Ajia vow their allegiance to him, before large crowds of admiring townspeople. On the following day all the important men of the town are invited to a great feast at the Ajari, and vast quantities of food are distributed by the Ajia who demonstrates the generosity expected of a great Kanuri aristocrat and receives the deferential courtesies owed to a great man. The feast which the Alkali makes is minor in comparison and is limited solely to the town aristocracy and the NA Malams.

796 Another extremely important yearly festival is called
782

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796 Ngumari Laya or Salla Laya. This is the festival at which sac-
782 rifice of a ram is made, corresponding to the Hebrew festival of Pesach and the Christian Easter. Salla Laya was celebrated on July 9, 1957. The first ram sacrificed is the Shehu's ram in Maiduguri, a special ram with black rings about his eyes. In Maiduguri a great festival marked by communal prayer attended by the Shehu accompanies the sacrifice of this, the first ram.
825 The Liman says the words "Bismillahi" (in the name of Allah) as he cuts the ram's throat, and the blood pours into a basin or shallow hole. In Maiduguri people rushed forward to dip their fingers into the blood and transfer it onto their face, as the
565 blood is considered blessed. After the Shehu's ram has been
431 sacrificed, rich men return to their homes and sacrifice their own rams. The meat is then distributed to the poor, and the people of one's ward. In Geidam Yerima Mustapha distributes about
123 a dozen rams to other important people. In 1957 this included the visiting anthropologist, who had the ram sacrificed appropriately by a neighboring Malam, and distributed the meat as sadaka to his neighbors and the people of his ward.

796 A month after Salla Laya is the festival of Tsuro Mbulo, also called Salla Laya Ngawarinz --the tail of Salla Laya (Ar. Ashura). It took place on the two days of August 5th and 6th.
785 During Tsuro Mbulo pious individuals fast for two days. Un-
561 like Ramadan, this is not an obligatory fast, and younger men tend not to fast while older men keep the fast of Tsuro Mbulo.
796 All, however, participate in the feasting after sunset of the
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second day. This is the time for paying the zakat, the alms-tax. Rich men give away clothes and money as sadaka at this time so that they will have good luck. Poor people give away kola nuts and perfume. This is also the time when members of the various jili give small gifts to members of linked jili with whom they have joking relationships (nəngima). As the sun sets on the second day all women bang on their water storage pots to drive away the jinn (spirit) who brings sickness. On the second night everyone also bathes. People, women in particular, then go to the houses of Malams where the Malam reads a section of the Koran which is then repeated by those present. The Malam then assigns counting of prayer beads (tajimi) for each person. Later in the night dancing is held in a central area, and many guns are discharged. Little boys mill about knocking sparks off smouldering pieces of wood onto other little boys.

The last of the important festival days is the Prophet's Birthday, called variously Ngumɔri Kura (great festival), Ngumɔri Kuguibe (kugui means chicken), since chickens are sacrificed at this time, or Mamaludu.

F. Marriage, Family and Household.

In the preceding chapter, the general features of Kanuri culture were presented and it was pointed out that this was largely ideal culture. The present chapter, in contrast, deals with a single community and describes behavior as it occurs

844 after birth. The birth takes place in a sitting position over a warmed wooden bowl. When the infant arrives it is washed and then continually warmed by the female attendants who heat their hands over [853] a dish of hot coals and then press the body of the child. Almost immediately attempts are made to have the infant feed at the mother's breast. The placenta is buried in the compound with no ceremony.

• [782] Men are barred from any direct participation in the actual birth process, but usually pray heavily and/or employ a mallam (Koranic teacher-priest) to pray for the successful outcome of the 846 birth. During the forty-day confinement period there should be no [565] sexual intercourse between spouses. Informants stated that strict adherence to the forty-day confinement rule as well as the sexual taboo may vary among the poorer classes where the woman's economic services are more in demand. However, the first eight days after birth are universally accepted as a time of strict confinement and sexual abstinence.

846 858 During the first eight days of life the infant is known as fatu (the little kitten) or kusoto gana (the little stranger) and is referred to when necessary in these terms. This is a strong tabu time for the parents, and they must be sure to maintain all cultural prescriptions to ensure the safety of the infant. Hardly any mention is made in public of the new arrival. Even its sex is unknown except by a few close female friends of the mother who are expected [766] to keep the secret. If it dies during this period, the infant does not receive a proper burial, but is unceremoniously interred in the women's section of the compound.

000 On the Friday within the eight-day period, or several

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[264] where cooked food is sold, or at ceremonial gatherings when there is
[782] generally more meat present in the food, due to the practice of killing a goat or a sheep at almost all periodic religious ceremonies and rites de passage. Rice, wheat, guinea-corn, maize, boiled roots and leaves, squashes, cucumber, tomatoes, occra, groundnuts, milk, chicken, butter, cooked meats, and millet beer brewed by pagans are also periodic but small additions to the normal peasant diet.(1)

S11 In the survey sample the average amount consumed per day per capita was 1.24 zaka(2) with almost the entire range (except for two cases) running from one to one and a half zaka per person. Using the zaka as roughly 1.6 lbs. of millet (it varies in size during the year) this means that for the most part the rural peasant eats 1.6 to 2.4
[435] lbs. of millet per day with a mean intake of 1.9 lbs. per person. The price of millet in Magumeri (1955-57) varied from 22/- to 20/- per bag (120 zaka), but remained for long periods at 25/- per bag. It follows then that for the period 1955-57 the average rural household of 3.9 (from the sample survey) or roughly four persons, required at least twenty-five bags of millet per year or about thirty-one pounds sterling in cash value at the prevailing market prices, as a minimum subsistence amount for their millet needs.

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[146] (1) From tests done in other sections of Northern Nigeria, it is estimated that the average peasant diet in the region as a whole, varies between 2400-2900 calories per day, with a general deficiency in proteins and vitamins, see Nicol, B.C., Nutrition in Nigeria, British Journal of Nutrition, Vol. 3 (1943) 25-43.

[804] (2) This was corroborated in the budget data. A zaka is a small gourd which is used as the standard measure in buying and selling small quantities of grain, beans and nuts. Four zaka equal one darum (a medium-sized calabash); four darum equal one za (a large calabash), and there are 7.5 to 7.8 za per buhu or large bag of grain, beans or nuts, i.e. about 120 zaka per buhu. Zaka of millet were weighed, measured and averaged to obtain English equivalents.

4: Cohen E-5 (1956-1957) 1961
MS14 Kanuri MS14

242 177 gains running up to 300%[2]. In two cases for groundnuts and ten for millet, the increase on the test plot was less than 10% of that on the non-fertilized one. These twelve plots were owned by nine people: allowing for eight cases of negligence through absense or sickness, this leaves forty-three cultivators who experienced a significant (more than 10%) increase in productivity due to the action of super-phosphate fertilizer.

After the harvest season (November to January) had ended nothing more was done on the project for some time. Malam Abdulla prepared his report and turned it in to the Agriculture department at the capital, but remained in the Magumeri area. In March a District Council meeting was held in Magumeri, and the fertilizer was on the agenda for discussion.

242 177 634 The District Council, under the chairmanship of the District Head is composed of Village Heads, Ward Heads and some elder compound heads from the various villages and hamlets of the district. The body, a British innovation, discusses local planning, and votes on the disbursement of a small amount of money known as the District Council Fund.

This was a rather special occasion for the Council, for they were to have an African District Officer rather than a European, which was the usual practice. Generally speaking, the meeting differed considerably from all other Council meetings attended by the writer. The people seemed much more relaxed, much less stiff and formal compared to previous occasions. Comments passed back and forth between one person and another, whereas at previous sessions, people had sat silently, and never spoke unless spoken to first by a superior. The resulting loss in orderliness was offset by a large gain in freedom of expression. [782] Many participants remarked afterwards on this difference and spoke favourably of the African District Officer, who prayed with the people at both the beginning and end of the meeting.

242 177 During the meeting, the District Head announced that the super-phosphate fertilizer was to be available within the next month or two for sale to those who would like to buy it. Several

[2] The standard deviations for these averages are as follows: millet, 25.2; groundnuts, 20.1.